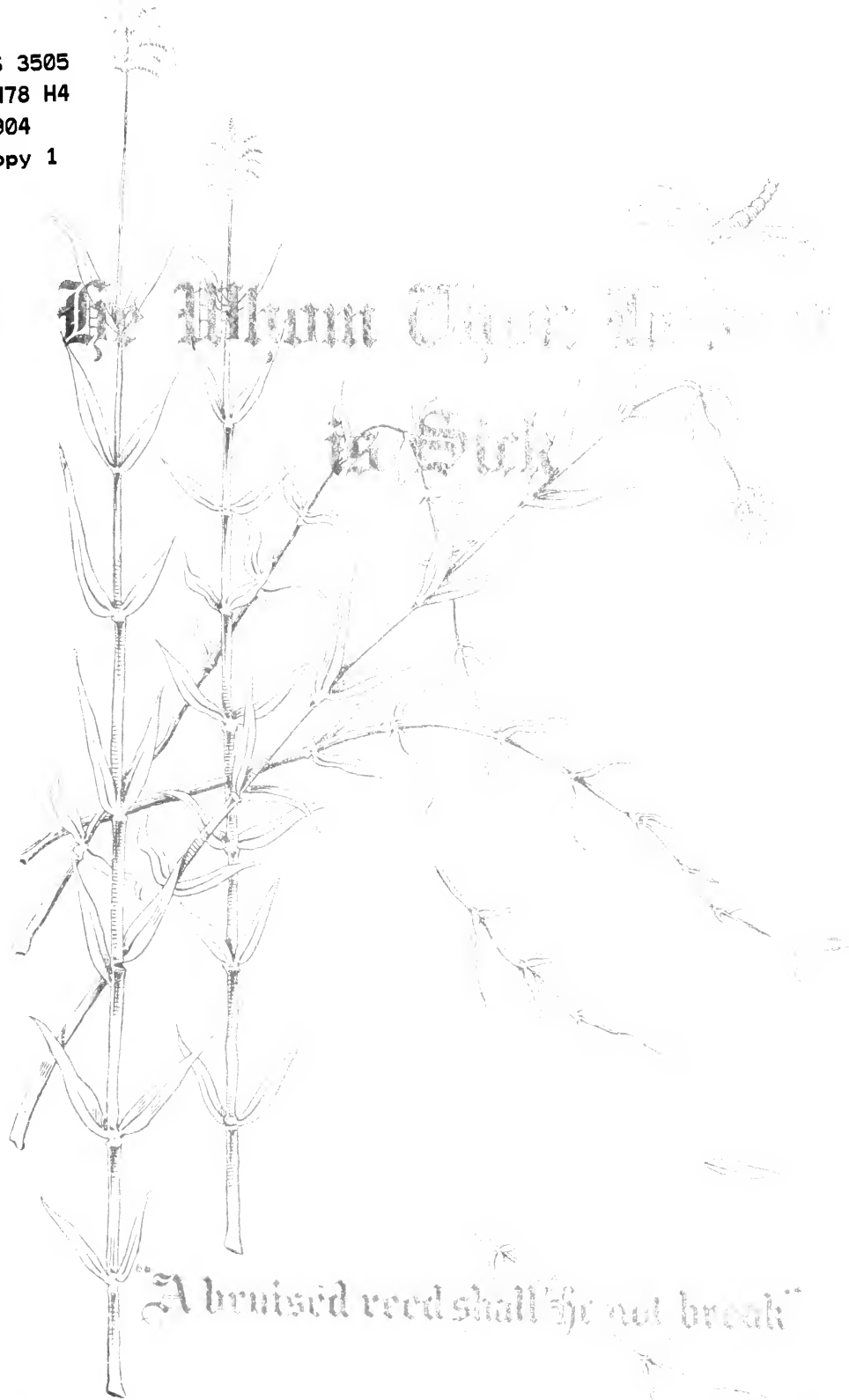


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The Humble Bee  
is Sick

"A bruised reed shall he not break"



*“He whom Thou Lovest  
is Sick.”*

BY

ROSA PENDLETON CHILES.

*Author of “Drama among the Druggists.”*



RICHMOND, VA.

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YHARLI N  
SERMON

TO THE MEMORY OF

**My Mother,**

THE THOUGHT OF WHOSE MARVELOUS STRENGTH  
AND PATIENCE IN LONG SUFFERING, WHEN SUR-  
CEASE CAME, LEFT THE ONLY FRAGRANCE IN THE  
HEART OF A CHILD, AND YET YIELDS FRAGRANCE  
TO THE HEART OF A WOMAN.

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## PREFACE.

THERE seems a tendency of late, especially among a class of so-called religious teachers, to minify pain, and the beautiful service of those to whom the Master appoints no other than patient endurance of steadfast suffering. To these extreme thinkers the patient invalid, resting beneath the shadow of unceasing pain, is a mental criminal, whose logic has in some way become entangled with a diseased imagination, and who has but to say, "There *is* no pain, therefore I cannot rest beneath the shadow of it," and immediately his conclusion will bring him to a state of perfect health.

Without formulating any syllogism to disprove the tenets of this extraordinary doctrine, I wish only to say that to one whose faith rests upon different principles the teaching seems altogether false, and to offer this little book to all suffering folk in loving sympathy. If there is aught in these lines that speaks to you of courage, patience, faithful endurance, and that enables you to see your part in a better light — the light of peculiar dignity, and of that

peculiar choice for you of a part that suits the mysterious development of your spirit better than any other part could do — I shall feel that the Master gave me a beautiful task in the writing of these lines. Take them as the message of my heart to yours, and I trust the warm love that fills my soul for all of you who suffer — whether through the sensitive nerves or in another way — may find its course through this little poem to the depths of feeling in your own souls. Perhaps I shall never know whether my message does you good or not, but my Father will, and that is all that is needful.

These lines are not meant to glorify pain, but to beautify it, and to make those whose lives are shut in from the great world of activity by shades of pain or uncommon care, aye, *common* care, as well, feel that they are shut in for the Master's use. You see, dear hearts, the active ones are so busy that the Master may not always draw them into soulful conferences, but you — you know better than I could tell you the hourly reminders of that Presence that whispers the secrets of abiding peace. He is your Comforter, and you are His.

ROSA PENDLETON CHILES.



## *“He whom Thou Lovest is Sick.”*

I WAS of late ill in a hospital,  
And there Fra Ugo Bassi's sermon read,  
That blessed sermon of the Vine, and as  
I read, drank wine of healing the Vine bled  
For broken spirits when in sacrifice  
It hung stripped of its purple fruit. Then, given  
In an infinite compassion, a strength  
Of body returned with the spirit's strength,  
That the sickened branch might the longer last  
And seek in the Vine more abundant life.  
And as the frail soul hung between earth-life —  
A span at most — and that eternal stretch  
Of time beyond it, while spring birds sang trills  
Of hope, nor lent to requiem their notes,  
Thought dwelt upon the Living Vine that bids  
Its branches bear unstinting fruitage, while  
They draw the fullness and the strength of life  
From the Parent Stem, until spreading wide  
In vivid beauty, the waving garlands  
Shall cover hill and dale, and plenteous  
In strength, yield purple clusters to refresh

The nations. Then, because the earth lacks warmth  
To bring to richer fruitage, some day, wrapped  
About the Central Stem, the branches shall  
Be drawn for perfecting where are the soil  
And sunlight needed for perennial growth.

Then earnestly I thought of how at last,  
When earth shall know no more the Healing Vine,  
No more its tendrils wave in the cool air,  
No more its graceful fruit in crimson tides  
Flow from the wine-press, barren boughs shall be  
Cut off, and prayed with fervent yearnings such  
As I, wrapped in my agony, might last  
When the day of this transplanting shall come.  
And here my thoughts, though broken as the life  
Then bound to narrow couch of pain, I write  
For others that are fettered to their beds,  
And dreaming of life in the Living Vine.

I learned 'tis not always the sickened branch  
That is most barren, nor need any fear  
The knife because its tendrils droop from lack  
Of strength to stand erect. Perchance the sap  
That would have gone to these has gone instead  
To fruit, and where lie low the sickly stem  
And leaf, lie also, freighted to the earth  
By wealth of bearing, ripened clusters which  
Await their hour to burst in scarlet streams

Of healing. Then fret not frail branch if leaves  
Green as the bay's beside thee flourish; for,  
A few short days the yellowed tendrils droop  
Under the fevered kisses of the sun,  
And there is lack of moisture to cool  
The slender veins, and then the Husbandman  
Will come and cast aside not boughs that parch  
And wilt above the fullness of their fruit,  
But those that by their side bear only leaves.  
'Tis naught that green boughs lift their heads in  
pride

Of strength, yet bear no fruit; for sick or well,  
The fruit must yield and be alone the test  
Of what shall live. But think not to escape  
The Pruner's knife, thou fruitful bough, for once  
It was declared, "Each branch in me that bears  
No fruit He takes away, and every branch  
That bears He purges, that this one may bear  
More fruit." So sharp may fall the painful blade  
Upon thy stock, and leave for all thy fruit  
A bleeding stalk. Dost feel a quiver? Wait,  
The bearing time will come again.

But yet  
The vine, with all its wealth of life and strength  
Of sacrifice, is not the only form  
To which the Master likens you. By this  
He speaks to men of vital life and wine

That flows in offering, but when Christ shows  
The world the steadfast, settled character  
Of those, who "having done all, stand" in strength  
And majesty immutable, He calls  
Himself the Builder and his children stones —  
The signs of changelessness. Now, grapes are  
type  
Of sacrifice, because the glory and  
Perfection of their life they yield to him  
Who treads the wine-press, but the crystal that  
Strong pressure in the cycles of its past  
Has fixed in permanence, yields not again.

And now beloved, if we are to be  
Stones in that human Temple, let us have  
The quality of stones, nor break, but bear  
The pressure of our place, nor seek to choose  
That place, but only rest secure and firm  
In any portion of the wall assigned  
Us by the Architect Divine — the joy  
And honor of a stone is to be used  
At all.

That Temple of Humanity,  
Erected by Divinity, will have  
Magnificence with which all lavishness  
Of Byzantine and Moorish was but work  
Of children when illusive form and tint

Once trembling sped through Fancy's train, and  
each

Well chosen stone will be the fairest where  
It lies, but if there architrave and frieze  
And cornice be, with sculptures fret, and here,  
Where little pressure is on stones that form  
The Temple's flower and finish, we find not  
Our place, then let us be content to bear  
The insistent pressure of middle walls.  
Some stones are meant for ornament, but some  
For other use, and which for each the stones  
Know not, but wait upon the Builder's choice.  
Of this alone the human block may be  
Assured — that He who builds can never err,  
But chooses as is fittest for the stone  
And for the Temple. If thy place is found  
In hidden niches of the inner wall,  
'Tis here the greatest strength is asked and thou  
Art chosen for an honored part. Think not  
With envy on the fretted block, for thou  
Wouldst spoil the frieze, and that would spoil the  
wall.

Nor think identity to lose when sealed  
Forever to those blocks whose semblance so  
Makes thee one with them that none may declare  
Wherein thy mission differs from the part  
Of stones that hem thee in, and each to each  
Cemented, ye make up the common mass.

The Spirit of the Temple fills each block  
With fervent life, distinct from all beside,  
Nor dwells alone in Psychic form of frieze  
Or cornice. Why lament the part assigned?  
Consider, murmurer: no capital  
Or architrave but bears the heat and light,  
Ay, oft the tempest, too; as well to bear  
The pressure.

It is not for souls, to whom  
Belongs the majesty of endless part,  
To mar that part with murmur; as the part  
Must live, so must the murmur live and be  
The soul's companion in its later sphere.  
Are there no fitter ones? Yea, let your choice  
Of all be suited to the endlessness  
That lies before you; nor, beloved, may  
Ye think of ease or joy of place, but as  
The branches of the Living Vine, think e'er  
Of sacrifice; and as the stones that make  
That Living Temple, think of strength to bear.

Dear heart, that longs for outer life, to have  
The angel of the breeze caress you and  
The dews of night your fevered throbs to cool,  
Fret not; your place is safe from cares that tent  
Themselves about those outer lives and spread  
Gray mists of trouble you may never know

Above them. Seems your portion bitter? Theirs  
Is not all sweet. If in the chamber whose  
Dull walls are echoes of your murmurings;  
A voice should whisper, "All is changed, the bonds  
Of pain are loosed," and straight the life should seek  
The gilded ways of freedom, then would all  
Be well? Nay, for activity's fierce clasp  
Might bind you closer than now bind your pain  
And helplessness.

Lie still, beloved, for  
*The lot is ever measured to the need;*  
That need that cries without the mystery  
Of universal plan to the one life,  
And only one, that can its wants supply,  
That need that cries without your inner soul  
For place supplied in universal plan.  
Hast never learned that in that plan our lives  
Are made to *do* or *bear*, as in the veins  
Of each there flow the pallid tides of pain  
Or crimson tides of action? Not all wine  
Of life is red, not all red wine the best,  
But each the product of a perfect fruit.  
The streams of labor and of suffering  
Flow side by side, nor may we always know  
Which current better serves the world; this God  
Sees now, and we must wait to see. Yet this  
Is plain — one river or the other flows  
In ev'ry living vein. What matter which?

God gives the world an angel for each need  
To watch above the lives of men in joy  
Or woe or rest or work, and all the earth  
Is shadowed by their presence. But He gives  
The angel of service only two wings,  
And one forever shelters those who all  
Their strength from crimson dawn to silver night  
Bestow on field and mart, while tenderly  
The other rests o'er those that give their strength  
From dawn to night and night to dawn to bear  
The pain that stills from work. No life but seeks  
Its shelter from the pinion shadowing  
The field of labor, but 'tis not for lives  
To choose, theirs only to accept the shade  
That rests above them, and to pray for strength  
To go forth gladly to the way of work  
Or pain. What right have souls to shrink from  
tasks

Assigned them? Theirs alone to stand supreme  
In silence, as those who need not themselves  
To choose, but rest beneath the choice of One  
Who knows the part, and him who best can fill  
It.

Souls, come get you to your place, and if  
You watch the sky for portents, think not that  
The soft white mass which rests above, and waves  
Of mist to sunward dipping, gathers all  
The gold into its bosom, is storm-cloud



And chargèd to deliver bolts of wrath.  
It is an angel's shadow, and clear writ  
Upon its wings to all who read is this  
Sweet message: "God knows who can *do* and who  
Can *bear*"; for Consolation is the twin  
Of Care, and wheresoever Pain shall lead,  
Ye sick ones, sore blinded by the dense fog  
Of your murmurings, and who closer press  
The thorns that prick you while you ever seek  
Release, will Solace follow on and cry:  
"This asks the Lord of you who knows how much  
To ask of each." Perchance He would not ask  
As much of one whose life was kissed to light  
By the same dawn, or trust that one as well  
To bear it. Yea, sure evidence and mark  
Of His divinity is marvelous  
Economy in power creative, so  
That beings looking first into the dawn  
Of life, yet purpled by the night through which  
They came, have each their own peculiar force  
And fitness for some task no other could  
Perform. Perchance not one of all the hosts  
That walk the strenuous ways of this world,  
Flushed with the wine of energy and strength,  
Or those that dwell in myriad other worlds  
Of space illimitable, ever glad  
In mystic labors hid behind the point  
Of trembling splendor in the midnight dome,

Could bear thy lot so well as thou. He gives  
His confidence for this to thee alone,  
Then dare thou fail, or trust supreme as this  
Betray? Nay, heart, bear on, bear well.

Look down

The vista of past centuries at One  
Who 'mid the jeers and mocking of the mob,  
The doubts of followers, the mighty weight  
Of inner cross, when all the harmony  
Of His eternal past was shocked by note  
Of discord shrill, bore patiently His cross,  
And left a crimson path to mark the way  
For all who follow Him. Look, heart, and see  
The scarlet thread that leads to Calvary,  
Then follow gladly in its narrow course,  
As one who knows the dignity of rank,  
The glory of a royal road.

Yea, souls,

Must we each one stop in the onward rush  
Of our life and see if we follow close  
The blood-stained way, or if in weakness we  
Have turned aside to other paths, which lead  
Not to Golgotha and to *life*. Now as  
We look by-paths are filled with souls astray;  
While some aweary from the long, long way  
Have laid their burdens down for respite, there  
Are others, guilt-stained more, who wander far

And gather here and there wild flowers, fair  
To see, but yet distilling poison  
Of sin and death, while butterflies with wings  
Of gauze and prismic hued drink from their cups  
And flutter in death on the heads of all  
Who pluck. One calls, they answer not, and calls  
Again, "My cross I bear." Dear Lord, forgive  
That while Thou mountest that dark steep where  
Pain

Shall run through flesh and soul and ply its course  
To sever into twain Thy carnate life  
From that eternal fleshless one, and thrust  
Its knives in keenest revelry where once  
Alone is given Pain to play in power  
And wantonness supreme, we wander on  
In lightsome ways, nor care that Thou Thy cross  
Dost bear while we bear not our own.

And now

I beg you, ye sick ones, who marvel that  
The angel of Ease brings you no surcease  
Of pain, to come with me to Galilee  
And learn how Christ in days of ministry  
On earth then dealt with one He loved when Death  
Stretched forth his hands to take him for his own.  
So prone we are to feel that when He walked  
Incarnate here glad flowers of healing sprang  
To life where'er His footsteps fell, while now

Men see the thorn and myrtle tree alone  
Spring from His tracks when Christ comes down  
unseen

To walk the way of life with us. And thus  
Is sown the seed of envy in our hearts  
Of those who touched His garment's hem and felt  
The pulses quicken into joyous life  
From virtue in the healing contact: but  
Whate'er our envy and our murmurings,  
In that far distant time, as ever now,  
The course of justice, with its source in God,  
Flows on — a stream that knows no tides, nor floods  
One spot to verdant life and barren leaves  
Another. Healing for one life and pain  
For one, but justice and unfailing love  
For both.

Now while Semitic murmurings  
Sweep storm-gusts o'er His path and Eastern skies  
Reverberate with Jewish thunder, now  
While tempest whiffs and tongues of lightning smite  
The sides of Calvary, the glory and  
The strength of measureless sacrifice cast  
A halo o'er the Master's life, yet we,  
All blinden to the lambent gleam, see but  
The Man of Love walk gently on His way  
And wear the majesty of matchless aim  
As humbly as the peasant wears his cloak.

And now when comes transcendent aim to fruit  
And fullness we see Him in Galilee,  
Not many days' journey from Bethany,  
And there He hears this all-pathetic cry :  
"He whom Thou lovest, Lord, is sick." Have ye,  
Hearts, not received a message like to this?  
Have ye no room whose shades have once been  
drawn,  
While shades of death their blackness cast — a veil  
'Tween soul and soul? Then, groping, did you try  
To pierce the gloom and let the sunlight through,  
The fragrance, and the poetry of life,  
As if the past could have no end? But gloom  
Like this, impervious to ev'ry sense  
Of man, enveloped you 'til fell the calm  
Of resignation on your souls, and you  
Could see the angel's face, nor dreaded more  
The shadow of his wing.

Ah! hearts, sad hearts  
Of loving memories, were ye far off  
When whispered in your ear the fatal word?  
Then how like years seemed days that interposed  
Between you and that distant one! Nay, days  
Were not, but nights, for shades of sorrow shut  
Out light, nor know we day has ever been  
Save in the thought of years now past when he  
We love was not sick, nor were we far off.

Was your pain great when mind and heart had  
grasped  
The meaning of the message? Think you then  
The Master felt no sting because Death claimed  
His friend?

When ye were called to walk the vale  
That slopes from heights of life to waters which  
Ne'er beat their banks but with an echo we  
Cannot interpret, hearing the swift strokes  
Of speechless oarsmen, and knowing your loved  
Should be borne to the land whose visions have  
Not met your sight, and you must stand alone  
On the dread shore, nor even cool your brow  
In the mysterious flood at your feet,  
Did not a cry escape you: "Lord, I can  
Not reach again the heights of peace if Thou  
Go not with me"? And straight did not He make  
His presence known, and whisper vital words  
Of tenderness with hand to hand and heart  
To heart, retracing with you all the vale  
Of woe to hills of joy beyond it? Can  
It be that He who feels the prick of thorns  
That sting us, and when dews of sorrow bathe  
Our brows, His own lays bare to the same mist,  
That He who from the fount of all our joy  
Or woe drinks deep, would not have us respond  
With sympathetic concept to the claims

That bring the heart of God to grief? The power  
And majesty of God sit throned on heights  
That we cannot approach, but once begirt  
By human limits that mighty All-Soul  
Was bound to earth, and note of tenderness  
Awoke that sings the longing of God's heart  
For tones in us responsive. Was it naught  
To Christ that He must suffer Lazarus  
To bear that last unconquerable pain  
When power was His to stay the blade of death?  
The might of God is shown not more in things  
He has the power to do, than in the things  
He does, but has the power not to do;  
And here is seen the only limit which  
Omnipotence has placed upon itself —  
The pain to exercise its power.

How sweet  
Had been that peaceful home, set in the side  
Of Olivet, and nursed by Southern breeze  
And sun! There was reserved for Him one spot  
Alone of rest and joy serenely sweet  
Upon the planet of His wanderings,  
Where freed from gory grasp of strife He let  
The fount of love in simple hearts bathe all  
The wounds that stung and all the weariness  
That palled. Here were three friends set in the mass  
Of enemies as jewels in a mine  
Of dross, and one of these was sick.

To one  
Who holds no bond more close all tenderness  
Is given bonds of friendship, and their threads  
As surely bind as stronger cords that draw  
Hearts closer and in drawing oft give pain.  
Last night I dreamed, and lo! a flood of light  
That dazzled eyes accustomed not to more  
Than tropic glare. The cause I sought and found  
Angelic form diffused the radiance —  
A ray of heaven's light had borne to earth  
Its messenger — and as I trembling looked  
Upon the form within that radiance,  
A voice said, "Child, fear not, but answer me —  
Believest thou in compensation?" Then  
I thought of all whose lives seem poorly paid  
For sorrow and for care, and answered, "Yea,  
In heaven." "But now?" bespoke the messenger.  
Again did vision of some human woe  
The motive give to my conception, and  
I gave reply, "Nay, nay, not here; in heaven."  
"But what means this?" the angel said, and lo!  
Without the radiance stood one who long  
Had been beside me in each wearing care,  
In all my blind mistakes, to help and soothe  
Me in the fever of my living. "Child,  
Behold thy friend," the angel said, "the Lord  
Of heaven had no more than this when here —  
Believest now?" "Yea, now," unfaltering,



I said, "I know that heaven is not all  
Of our compensation, for much comes here."  
Now friendship, heart, is compensation's gift  
For closer bonds ne'er made or lost.

Dear heart,

When the raven of sorrow bore to thee  
Its message writ in woe, didst tarry long?  
Nay, nay, but envièd the bird, and made  
All haste, while o'er the soul swept waves of fear  
That chilled the faith to freezing; but the Lord  
Two days abode in the place where He was  
Before He turned His steps to Bethany.  
How gladly would His love have taken wings  
Of spirit speed, had not a voice cried, "Nay,  
Abide, my glory must be wrought in death  
As well as life." As man, the love of man  
Swept o'er His soul in tides of anguish, but  
As God, the love of God spoke calm and peace  
To the hot floods of human feeling. Thou  
Couldst not have staid? Nay, heart, but in thy  
depths  
Is only human flood, and thine the strength  
Of mortals, broken by rush of mad waves,  
And God can do what thou canst not. Hast said  
To thyself in wonderment: "God is good,  
Yet suffers agony to tear the heart  
And crush the life," and hast allowed black doubt

To close in struggle with thy faith until  
The Night of Unbelief her draperies  
Of darkness has let fall upon the field  
Of battle, wrapping folds of deep despair  
About the soul? Then cease this struggle, heart,  
And know that God does much beyond the power  
Of man to understand. Why try to bound  
Omnipotence by human concept? Thou  
Who reasonest, hast fathomed all the mind  
Of God? Nay, in this present world God walks  
Beside us hand to hand and heart to heart,  
But mind to mind alone in heaven. "Be still,  
And know that I am God," — He suffers us  
To know, and this is all — *sufficient, too*,  
Can the frail bird that skims the air and rests  
Its pinion on a twig of bush or tree,  
The while with mellow strain it charms a child  
At play, know aught of all that fills that mind —  
Its plans of play or dreams of might? Or can  
The child, who, tired of game and song of bird,  
Now comes and rests its head upon thy knee,  
Know aught of all that stirs and thrills thy life,  
Or measure the motives that move the minds  
Of men? Dost try, frail human mind, to know  
Thy God?

If thou inexorable front  
Of Pain couldst see in furrowed segment cut

On brow of child or friend, as Suffering  
 His image traced in the warm flesh, and thou  
 The sculptor and the chisel couldst thrust out  
 With one stroke of the hand, and see once more  
 The lineless beauty of that brow, wouldst wait?  
 Nay, for man's strength is far too frail, but God  
 Can wait 'til Pain his last and boldest line  
 Has traced, and through that stress of agony  
 His marvelous design fulfills; for know,  
 O heart, the strength of all is fixed in need.  
 What need have we to know the power that lets  
 Pain trace his image in the tender flesh  
 Of one we love? Is Pain responsible  
 To us? Are we the censors of his work?  
 God gives man strength in draughts that meet man's  
     need,  
 Nor suffers him to drain the fount nor see  
 Its inner depths of ruby flood. On Mount  
 Moriah Abram one potation drank,  
 And raised aloft his blade to smite the son  
 In whom lay mystery of nations' life,  
 In whom lay also love's fair promise. But  
 Death's sting lasts only while the knife falls back  
 And life's tide flows into eternity's.  
 God knew how much to ask of Abraham,  
 And ever knows how much to ask of you.  
 You could not for a day hold firm thumb-screw  
 Or rack to torture your worst enemy;

The soul of Anguish, with its blood-stained gaze  
Searching your soul for respite, would wring cry  
Of pain from you: "Stop! stop! I cannot bear  
To see thee longer." But the Lord, bidding  
An hour when some frail life shall lay aside  
The aching garment of the flesh, and wrapped  
In robes of finer fabric, glor'ous trail  
In eternity's halls, can hold for years  
With iron grasp the trembling, aching, tired,  
And dying nerves of one He loves far more  
Than thou hast ever loved thy dearest here,  
Till these, exhausted long, at last beat out,  
And God's great plan for that small life is wrought.

I watched a life apart from pain and thought  
How beautiful the soul that dwells in form  
Like this, whose organs, free from Suff'ring's whip,  
Move only at the call of joyous Good —  
A flawless agency through which the will  
Of God may work in all the varied forms  
Of action; and yet fruitless flitted days  
And weeks, and lay the listless hands, as cold  
And motionless as stone, within her lap.  
Again I saw this one, but lo! the face,  
Once artist's dream, in all its curves wore marks  
Of tort'rous pain, yet flowed the warm blood as  
From hearts that feel, in ev'ry vein, and now  
Rare virtues none had seen before shone forth

So all beheld and loved a life like this.  
Is this the way He speaks through all? Nay, not  
Through all, *but some*. If thou, dear heart, art one,  
Be thankful. Stretch forth now thy arms *and they*  
*Will touch thy Lord*, so close He lives to one  
Whose form is clasped by pain. No one of all  
His minist'rings of grace His presence needs  
So much, nor trusts He saint nor angel, but  
The Lord keeps for Himself the priceless task  
Of biding with the sick.

And thou couldst not  
Have tarried when a friend lay dying? Yea,  
Humanity is borne upon the wings  
Of Love to meet its sorrow — greater he  
Who bids his sorrow wait on slower flight  
Of Wisdom, for Love sees the cause alone,  
Nor waits upon effects, while Wisdom looks  
Beyond and sees eternal ends. Canst count  
The souls now glorified because the Lord  
Unsealed the grave at Bethany? Canst mark  
The power of consequence? "To the intent  
Ye should believe and God be glorified,"  
He said. What mattered then that death? As  
naught,  
*And yet as much* — so much that "Jesus wept,"  
For though at times, in mystery divine,  
Full hard and crushing seemeth God's strong hand,

And long we seek some freedom from it, then  
That great Heart throbs in love transcending far  
The love of women, fonder than the love  
Of mothers when they first imprint a kiss  
Upon the cheek of new-born babe, and thrills  
With passionate feeling for all the life  
Of Anguish in our veins. No quiv'ring nerve  
But draws Him closer in embrace of love  
And strength commingled, while we feel the grasp  
of iron fingers only. Ah! lie still,  
We feel the love in God's firm touch when flesh  
And mind and heart lie silent under it.

I saw the hand of Pain fall heavily  
On one whose faith was strong as ancient oaks,  
But one whose fragile life no vigor held  
More than the reed — a plaything of the winds;  
And firmer grew the grasp inflexible,  
Until the frail life sighed its strength away.  
Then all who saw the depths of justice, love,  
And mercy fathomed for a reason, while  
One smiled without the Realm of Perfect Sight  
And said, "God's reasons lie not in the depths  
Of human understanding, but in heights  
Of divine conception, involving more  
Than ye on earth may know, nor should ye seek  
To know, but only to accept."

Dear heart,  
That wearied art with long, long suffering,  
And seest only more to take its place  
And sharper as the nerves grow tenderer,  
Drink deeper at the fount of patience; let  
Its cool draughts calm unrest that flows, a mad  
And fevered current, in thy veins. The soul  
That dwells within the fount will soothe thy life  
And whisper revelation's truth to come;  
For, heart, in this is paradox complete —  
That he who waits in patient ignorance  
Awakes in perfect knowledge. Does some voice  
Tell thee the time is long? Wait, wait, brave heart,  
Enduring 'til the throbbing life of pain  
Is done.

Seems that yoke heavy which He told  
Us should be light? Yea, heart, but burdens are  
Not reckoned by the Master for their weight  
Upon the tender flesh, but for their load  
Upon the vital spirit, so He speaks  
Unto that vital life and says, "Ye shall  
Find rest unto your souls." The Father ne'er  
Forgets the tortured nerves, nor counts as naught  
The anguished music of those trembling chords,  
But rest is for the soul.

Hast felt thyself  
Forsaken when the pain was hard to bear?

'Tis then with soul to soul the Lord stands by  
And bears the hardest part Himself, although  
Thou mayst not see nor feel His presence by.  
How think you Laz'rus felt, the giant, Life,  
And giant, Death, their mighty bolts fierce hurled  
Unto the mortal end, and knowing well  
The battle's issue? Ah! what then of that  
All-loving Friend and Lord whose power had raised  
So many other men? Hast thought this one  
Whose sun of life had set and left but one  
Red streak on the horizon's brim — a thought  
That burned within the brain — cried not as yet  
The Lord Himself should cry, "Ah! 'why hast

Thou

Forsaken me?' " Had Christ forsaken him?  
Nay, nor will He forsake a single one  
Of you. Lean on the air invisible  
And know that He is in it. Though thou canst  
Not feel the thrilling Form, yet close He holds  
Thee in His arms, and will not let thee go,  
For love, for very love, because thy pain  
Is needful for thy perfecting. Why seek  
Release so soon? God's promise is to him  
Enduring steadfast to the end, and still  
'Neath all the purpling woe that brews to storms  
Above. No limit set on crucial tests  
Save dissolution only, so thou canst  
Not say, "To-day, to-morrow, and my soul



Shall leave its prison for a freer air.”  
Wouldst try to change God’s broader limit?

Ah!

Ye souls with whom discipling is pain  
And long endurance fellowship, none know  
So well as ye that for a service great  
As yours must strength and patience sink their roots  
Into the very Rock of Life, and drink  
Their nourishment from waters under it.  
No other souls have need of strength like yours,  
For these, released from trial for the rest  
Of night, have time to walk in the cool air  
At eve, to meet the living form of Joy,  
While ye at dawn or noon or night, must bide  
Forever in the furnace of your pain.  
Ah! ye know well your need, then put forth  
    strength,  
O souls of greater tests, and marvel not  
That ye must bear so much, but marvel that  
He chooses you to bear.

    In olden time  
Were three who walked unscathed amidst white  
    flames,  
Because beside them walked One who is Lord  
Of elements, and since vast hosts have trod  
The flames, all with the same companionship.

Is none a martyr save one whom the arm  
Of Fire encircles? Are not martyrs, too,  
They who lie long, long years in the white flames  
Of sickness, bound to their beds as to stakes,  
And still because God's way for them lies where  
A furnace burns intense, but hidden? Yea,  
And some are ye. Would miss your martyrdom,  
Afraid to try the flame? Come, courage, souls,  
God's hand controls the furnace of your pain  
To stay it when your life has had its pure  
Refining. Yea, and more, for harshest tongues  
Of flame can never drown the melody  
That trembles on His words, as by thy side  
And hand in hand, the Master whispers, "Child,  
Fear not, 'tis I, bear on."

Didst dream at first  
And pray that death would end ere long the throb  
Of nerves, tossed as by summer winds is tossed  
The aspen's leaf, and rocked by sweep of storms  
And counter sweep, and twisted, torn, yet held  
As aspen's leaf in life? Most prayers God holds  
In secret chambers of His heart — the room  
Of worship, treasury of offering,  
But this? Is this one treasure, heart? What  
right  
Have souls to offer such? Could one of you  
Now stand and say, "My work is done and I

Would have my rest?" Thy rest *from what?* Ah!  
bear

A little yet. The heart must not life's tide  
Cut off by sudden stop, but beat out throb  
By throb, on God's strict records numbered, known  
Alone to Him and thee.

Our souls, dear heart,  
Are flowers, blooming ever in the air  
Of an infinite love, and some may bloom  
And pass in a day, but yet others must  
Preserve their sweetness, and for this must yield  
Themselves to crushing rollers 'til the life  
Is slowly shed in fragrance that shall last;  
Just as the jasmine blossoms may delight  
A fleeting moment and ephemeral  
Then pass away, but some rare buds allow  
Not wingèd sprites that in a sixty-breaths  
Of time have gone to bear their sweetness off,  
And so consent to maceration that  
The attar of jasmine may longer please  
The sense of men.

Confess thy thoughts of life:  
Hast dreamed of happiness the portion here,  
And heaven bliss immortalized? Is all  
Of life a quick progression in the things  
That make for bliss, with ease on ease and joy

On joy and ecstasy on ecstasy,  
All ravishment and rapture, while we mount  
The golden ladder, rung on rung, 'til lost  
To sight in skies whose blue envelops joys  
Eternalized? Know, dreaming soul, thine is  
The pilgrim's progress, and outstretched lie field  
And moor and mount, all filled with terrors which  
Make men's hearts start without their place for fear,  
Ere faintest gleam from yonder Jasper Throne  
Shall break upon the groping sight. A dream,  
A vision life, and filled with phantasies?  
A zephyr's breath and day with music thrilled?  
A fluttering of rose leaves, then a sense  
Of perfumed air? Nay, heart, for life is more.  
Trace on Time's Record Book the service done  
By souls and know their life, and thus alone,  
For time is marked by deeds; a day may be  
A thousand years, its book of deeds possess  
A thousand leaves, if this was filled with good;  
A thousand years not e'en a day, its book  
Of deeds one whited blank, if empty these  
Have passed. Yea, life is long, fierce action,  
wrought  
In patient strength — who does or *bears* the best,  
He fullest is of life.

Hast watched the skies  
Of life and thought the blue no broidery

Could have but that in silver, crimson, gold,  
And emerald? Ah! see the needle ply  
In blackness, tempest, and tornado; e'er  
Must these their portion add to make complete  
The glory of the whole, for detail is  
But ornament of shadow. Are the seas  
Of life ne'er swept but by the sporting waves  
Of joy, as they chase each other in play?  
Gaze on and see those waters dash their force  
Against the ships that ride them, leap in air  
To meet the storm, embrace its gloom, and fall  
Upon their beds to rise in greater strength  
And battle to the end. No life has place  
For stagnant skies or stagnant seas; then, heart,  
Let action rule the current of the soul  
(Though oft the body lies upon its bed)  
And sweep it onward, onward, 'til it meets  
The River in its course.

Another's life

Hast watched, and thought thine own the harder?

Thou

Art not concerned with this; to mortals it  
Is not given to weigh their lives in scales  
That balance perfectly — adjustment lies  
With God. Full often thoughts like this strike deep  
At Nature's sorest point and sink their shafts  
Into the vulnerable flesh and find

Their way to vital parts. The invalid  
Bound fast upon his couch, with sharp intent  
Bent to the problem, wonders why fresh life  
Throbs in the veins of one who walks the way  
Without, as free as the wild bird to find  
Its course, and never knowing aught of all  
The passionate purpose that sets its seal  
On him, and works its magic course in throb  
On throb of pain, save such ephemeral  
Impression as must come to all at sight  
Of tense and pallid features — portraiture  
Of suffering. And ever deeper sinks  
The blade of thought to bring to naught Pain's work  
Of love, and make thee feel that thine is lot  
The hardest. Not alone is pain, perchance,  
The portion, but the pain that seeks to bear  
Thee company because thou lackest close  
Companionship of earth and hast no life  
Near linked to thine; but thou, mistaking all  
The motive of thy sympathizer, canst  
See only bitter made more bitter, and  
Cry out that sharp and stinging pain is borne  
The hardest with no soul on thy account  
To feel distress — nor parent, child, nor one  
To whom the life draws nearer whispering:  
"Heart, this is pain to me," and here the plaint  
Is fixed in truth. 'Tis hard to have no soul  
To whom thou art most precious walking close

Beside thee down the deep, deep ways of pain,  
When feet that tingle with the constant sting  
Of nettles dread to take one other step,  
And hands that reach for help and quiver meet  
But thorns on ev'ry overhanging branch  
That promises support. Down all the steep,  
Rock-covered ways of agony one likes  
To feel the influence of fond caress  
And falling tear to soothe to calm repose  
The broken spirit. Is not the request  
But small? "Dear Lord, I'll bear the pain, I'll bear  
It all, but grant me this one little thing —  
A breath of love to soothe it." Ever is  
It hard to lean on Him alone; though His  
The only presence that can give us peace,  
Humanity so potent is we fain  
Would grasp forms tangible, and pray our Lord  
To visit us in the person of one  
Held dear by human ties. The feeling is  
A form of nature common as the lips  
That plead, and He who made us dust will bear  
With human throbs, not for our sakes alone,  
But to uphold the love that stoopeth low  
To our infirmities. 'Tis hard that thou  
Shouldst be inflexibly locked in the arms  
Of Pain, with ev'ry sense of body dulled,  
Save only the fast feeling nerves, and see  
Another walk down Freedom's sunlit paths

And following some gilded dream of hope  
To sure fulfilment — hope that thou hast hid  
Behind the shadows of thy lot; or worse,  
Perchance, 'tis hard to feel the fetters drawn  
About thee, yet be pressed by some severe  
Necessity to labor for thy part,  
And drag thy irons to the daily task.  
And bear each morn the sting of nerves that fain  
Would be forever stilled, and find no rest  
At night, and yet with morn thy labors must  
Again pursue, subsistence for thy pains  
To earn and keep alive the aches and throbs  
Of life (O mockery of mockeries!),  
While yonder, fetterless, another moves,  
Thrillèd with strength, and glad as the spring-bird  
For very living. But hush all the wild  
And bitter plaint ('tis this that robs the lot  
Of sweet), and thank thy Lord he chooses thee  
To bear, as one held worthy of a trust.  
Yea, heart, be glad for very living, too,  
Glad as the morning star that glows serene  
Between the bars of crimson sky, when dawn  
First beams from the lap of the night. Look up  
To the infinite heavens, whose repose  
Broods above weary spirits. Listen, heart,  
To the glad music of the spheres — a strain  
Too fine for souls not sensitive from pain  
To hear — at some lone hour when sleep has left



Thy eyes, and gazing out into the night  
And space illimitable, they behold  
Those limpid balls swing each in place, nor clash,  
Nor murmur, but each star accepting its  
Own fixèd orbit, moves therein by day,  
By year, by century, and sings the march  
Of pure content. While greater lights move on  
Content, should lesser ones complain? Not one  
Of all the galaxy, breathed to its place  
By word supreme, gave forth a trembling note  
Of discord until mortals found their place,  
And made of earth the Star of Variance.

Has Thought turned murmurer, and asked thee  
why  
Thy bark is caught within the maelstrom and  
Whirled in mad circles by the twisting waves,  
While on the gentle heave of quiet seas  
Another bark glides smooth and joyous on  
To its appointed haven? Stay this plaint,  
Nor mar with fretful murmurings the life  
That God is trying to perfect. Walk close  
Beside Him as He meets thee on the shore  
Of Galilean Sea within thy soul,  
Then ask him face to face, "And what shall this  
Man do?" The blue ripples will rhythmic bear  
His answer on and on to further seas,  
And far beyond the whirlpool that has caught

Thy barge within its swirlings, "What is that  
To thee?" What right have I, dear Lord, to ask  
Thy plan for any other? Is it not  
Sufficient thou hast planned for *me*?

Would miss  
Your pain? Nay, think what else to lose beside —  
A soul of finer finish. Does the vale  
Between the everlasting hills that shows  
Its solid green beneath white daisies blown  
Above, look to another as to thee?  
Are trills of mock-bird's song, that rhythmic stir  
On leaves of the oak which repeat their thrill  
In shadows on thy bed, as exquisite  
Of melody to any other as  
To thee? Are violets as sweet? Nay, some  
Are poets while they walk the world without,  
But all may poets be while bound to couch  
Of pain. Can one intoxicant with strength  
And caught in outer circles of life's whirl,  
Weave glory in each light and shade or hear  
Seraphic choirs in common sounds? Can such  
An one in sleep too deep for dreams behold  
The visions waiting on thy fragile rest?  
Are these e'er kissed by angels in their sleep,  
Or do they talk with God Himself in hours  
When all are held in silent rest but He  
And thou? Nay, bear the pain for poet's eye

And transformation's symmetry of soul.  
A mere block in the sculptor's hand may change  
To Psychic dream, yet feel no thrill of pain  
In transformation, but when God would bring  
A soul to perfectness, the chisel falls  
On spots so delicate that only He  
Can see and thou canst feel.

Ye may not know  
The wherefore of your pains; this only doth  
Appear — the largest good to you, some dear  
One, or *an enemy*. What matter why?  
Have ye, beloved, not enough to think  
Of how to bear? It is not given souls  
To know all things, but it is given each  
To bear its lot, and this for solace — *back*  
*Of all is God.*

The order of events  
Has marked for each its correlate — for smiles  
Are tears, for joy is grief, for restful ease  
The throbbing pang, as Nature balances  
Her mounts with vales, her seas with continents,  
And day with night. Should life without the soul  
More beauty show than life within? Nay, heart,  
The golden curtain of thy day is lined  
With sable, as the curtain of the earth  
Anon hangs dark or light, and now thy dreams

Are 'neath the shadow of the darker fold.  
 Couldst dream as well in sunlight? Ah! thy bed  
 Is drawn within the shadows now to let  
 Thee dream. But one may say that dreams are dark  
 If born in shadow. Nay, more marvelous,  
 For He who paints thy visions dwells in shade  
 When thou art there.

If not within the life  
Is found for ease and pain an even scale,  
The correlate must be without it, and  
If pain thy portion be in balancing  
Another's ease, why question, heart? If some  
Must suffer, why not thou? Yea, take the part  
In thankfulness that ease has come to one  
If not to thee. But yesterday there lay  
A birdling on my hearth, sore bruised by fall  
From nest above, nor soothing took, nor food,  
But gasped for hours (in bird-life long), while that  
Same hour his fellows dipped their graceful wings  
In the clear ether, circling joyous, taught  
By mother-bird to fly. Must bird-lives have  
Their correlate of ease and pain while we  
Have only ease?

But one may say, "I'd bear  
My own pain, howsoever sharp — the pain  
That comes from some mistake or sin of mine —

But this comes from another's error, and  
Transmitted unto me by one I know  
Not, nor have loved, and long ere they that gave  
Me life were born, this soul poured in the veins  
Of a child the bitter cup of its pains,  
And went into the infinite to find  
Its place, nor can my suffering weave joy  
Or woe in the unalterable lot.  
Ah! heart, hast never learned that souls must drink  
The wine poured out for them in cup that holds  
The dregs another left, nor once may stop  
To dwell upon the bitterness, but drink  
'Til all is drained, and see that no lees left  
Embitter cup that passes from their hand?  
Ah! there, dear heart, is all the bitterness —  
The passing from thy hand, when the cold eyes  
Of Dumb Reproach without the future rise  
To plead their cause. But if thou mayst not stay  
Transmission of thy part, then see there goes  
With pain a spirit beautified by peace.  
Thy pain thou mayst not give to all, but such  
Alone as spring from flesh and blood of thine,  
But patience, grace, and strength are flowers that  
wrap  
Their tendrils round the souls of all who know  
Thee, and from these extend to other souls,  
And on their sweetness trail and sink their roots  
In fertile soil and bear a fragrant bloom.

Then, heart, when all is said the tale of life  
Is soon spelled out. Yea, while we close our ears  
To miss the bitter climax, inner sense  
Reveals the climax past, for time waits not  
Upon our fears, but ever bears us on  
In flight more swift than that of storm-swept birds  
To our appointed end. Why fret while hours  
With pinions for the swiftest flight, which rest  
Not neither day nor night, make unseen course  
Through unseen air to unseen worlds? A few  
Strokes of the mystic pinion, and no more  
Thy pains will live to fret thee, but some spring  
Of action God designed by these to put  
In motion, lives, and starts fresh springs each day  
In other souls, and on through centuries  
It moves, nor knows a limit save the end  
Of time, when days shall mingle with the one  
Vast æon of eternity as fresh  
Drops mingle with the endless sea, and there,  
Transformed, will meet thee in that Everness  
In potent form of beauty and of love.  
If pain of yours, wreathed in the blossomings  
Of patience, cause some spring of love to move  
In other souls — the beggar feeds, or clothes  
The needy, shows the rich man and the poor  
In loving fellowship, awakes one soul  
To smile into its Maker's eyes and meet  
His smile, then know your pain is no vain thing,

Nor need you envy him whose portion is  
To drink the wine of vital energy,  
And stand within the forum masterful  
In active strength — they serve as well who lie  
And suffer.

Now, again of Lazarus :

What matter that Death claim his own? As naught,  
And yet as much, for God's great heart was moved  
To sympathy of tears. So when He plans  
For thee. Though pain is woven in thy lot —  
The very woof and web of life — and this  
Enough for thee to know, yet often as  
The night watches find Him and thee alone,  
With the harsh garment of thy pain drawn close  
About thee, then the tears of God fall so  
That thou canst almost feel them on thy face.  
Did Jesus weep for Lazarus alone?  
Nay, heart, behold His tears for thee. Draw close,  
Look face to face into the watching eyes  
And see the heart of love; breathe low, and miss  
No note of all the throbbing tenderness  
That beats above thee; lose no whisper as  
He bids thee follow while he leads from vale  
To peak, from peak to summit, far upborne  
From regions of our grosser sight, as once  
On Tabor three disciples stood. Wilt tell  
Thy nurse a pleasant dream has soothed thee? Yea,

The dreams of one who follows where He leads  
Are ever pleasant, nor are all His mounts  
Called Calvary.

Think not, dear heart, that I  
Forget the harder part, nor say, "This one  
Has never suffered." Nay, I have, nor can  
Forget my fretting 'neath His rod, yet when  
The iron Hand inflexible has lain  
Upon me, nor would loose its clasp for cry  
Of mine, I then have felt the throbbing love  
That held the Hand in steadfastness and soothed  
My spirit, until grown submissive, all  
Mad fretting ceased, and with my Lord I climbed  
The heights to Tabor, and there prayed for strength  
To reach the higher point of Calvary,  
For Tabor is half-way upon the road,  
But Calvary its end.

I count myself  
Unworthy to e'en touch the fevered brow  
Of one of you, who, calm in spirit, now  
Lies kissed by Pain, and patient in that clasp  
Inflexible, long years await surcease  
That comes with death alone, yet feels no throb  
Of murmur, but as something treasured close  
You press your pangs and take them for a bond  
Most precious, knowing that the touch of pain



Is but the kiss of God. Your couch is ground  
So hallowed such as I, whose suffering  
Has stirred a harsher note, dare not approach  
You nearer than to touch the draperies  
About your bed and kiss their sacred folds  
In thankfulness that such as you can prove  
The blessedness of pain. Could any count  
It small in you to rest in silence and  
Serenity within the steadfast Arms,  
Seraphic radiance upon your brow  
And smile of joy upon your lips, with ears  
Deaf to discordant notes in tortured frame,  
And hearing only the soft lullaby  
That God ne'er sings but to the one He holds  
Thus close? Nay, heart, by the fierce pains of Him,  
Who since no higher service He could give  
To God and men gave suffering, we know  
Full well its mightiness, and must believe  
That He who gave it will receive it as  
A service glorious as all men do  
Or long to do. But this is asked to make  
The service fit — the love that takes it as  
It would another task and ever bears  
In patient faithfulness. And here the soul  
Should wing its flight through all infinitude,  
Nor rest till at the throne of Power it cries  
For strength, nor rise 'til strength is given —  
a strength

Against which many pains cannot prevail.  
O Master of all pains, grant that when Thou  
Dost bid me follow Thee, I follow well.  
Until to waters fierce that lash their waves  
About my life and whip to agony  
The weary flesh, Thou shalt say, "Peace, be still!"

I could not be of those, who hold that pain  
Of body is the least of human ills.  
The fancy of an ill-stirred mind, a form  
Of sin that works alone within the brain  
Of weaklings, something conquered by an act  
Of will. When God chose sacrifice to be  
The penalty for sin, and made Himself  
Its subject, He chose pain of body as  
Its agent. Think you there is naught in this?  
Nay, no vagary of that Mind Supreme,  
But choice of sentient pain that He himself  
Might bear the worst — the majesty of God  
Could choose no less. And so, beloved, pain  
The finer means a finer purpose fixed  
In the Infinite Mind for you, for if  
Not least of all His mighty service was  
The agony of flesh and nerve, this is  
Not least of yours. What hero boasts of deeds  
More fair than any patient invalid's?  
On that eternal, changeless Record is  
It writ that they are heroes who endure.

Of all the qualities that move in men  
And thrill to action, ever hath been love  
Esteemed the strongest, most to motive power  
That works in God akin. Could He whose heart  
Is source of love and makes it well of all  
The best in us, have other fountain-spring  
When comes our turn to have the body, heart,  
And life wrought in the infinite plan? Ah!  
Your pains are tokens of dilection, for  
Your life is ruled by One who loves, and you  
Of that great love are object. Calls the bird  
Unto its mate in the fathomless depths  
Of the blue, and in rifted rock, far down  
The sunless cliff, a flower springs to view  
Of Him alone who walks abroad at eve  
In cañon solitudes; in mother's arms  
A babe coos to the smiles that woo it, and  
All by the Father's love o'ershadowèd,  
As thou. 'Tis sweet to be with babe and bird  
And blossom object and delight of love  
Like this. Hast led thy feet o'er rough-hewn paths  
And fields where thorns have torn? Well, what of  
that?  
Wouldst thou have missed the love that led thee  
thence?

"He lieth sick whom Thou dost love." Swift  
borne

By angels, the sad message finds thy Lord  
Ere consciousness has caught the sting of pain  
From the all-faithful nerves. Perchance, as once,  
The Master tarries. What of that? Shall He  
Whose power inherent holds the universe  
To its balance and swings above it heaven  
Of perfectness, to which the motive moves  
In all its worlds, in which their promise ends,  
Now speed his steps to stay thy pains? And yet,  
If best for thee, dear heart, how swifter than  
The storm's breath would the Lord of Healing find  
His place beside thee.

No marvel was it  
The man of Bethany must walk alone  
To the River's brink and alone sink down  
In the engulfing depths. The Master looked  
With loving eyes down all the centuries  
At the long, long train of suffering folk  
Who should give body, hope, and life to serve  
Him in their turn, and said, "For these I must  
Abide, that they may know the love that works  
Through pain." He tarried then, dear heart, to  
teach  
Thy lesson and that other needful one  
Of strengthened faith through miracle of life  
Restored, and motive power of both was love —  
Love that in faithfulness must ever hold

Its purpose greater than the pain in which  
It worketh. Yet the very record shows  
The tenderness that yearns to all to whom  
The Lord appoints discipling that works  
In the sensitive flesh. It had not so  
Appealed to thee to say that Lazarus  
Was sick, but "he Thou lovest" makes as thine  
The message, for the Master loves thee, too,  
And thou as Lazarus must wear the cross  
Of pain, nailed fast to the pitiless weight.  
'Tis for the well to *bear* their cross, the sick  
Must *wear* it, pinioned to its outstretched arms  
In lines of unpitying, last strength.

The worship of song is fragrance of joy  
From flowers that bloom in the soul's glad day,  
The worship of prayer is incense exhaled  
From hearts that burn choicest spice of life  
In offering, but worship of the pain  
That never ceaseth is the offering  
Of life itself, and this the Master asks  
From some of you.

'Tis strange we should mistake  
For evidence of hate the faithful strokes  
Of love. Not thus the feeling to one who  
Administers the part of parent here.  
A moment may the faithful rod seem mark

Of hate, but when the mother's arms once clasp  
Us to her throbbing heart, we must believe  
That love is there, and so the passionate  
Caress return, and on the anguished breast  
The curtain of sleep falls on our small hurt,  
And we know naught but that an angel kissed  
Us in our dreams and left upon our cheek  
A tear, then wake to smile into the eyes  
That watch above us, and a deeper sense  
Within us stirs. Yet when God's hand doth hold  
The rod in love, deep, warm, transforming, we  
In bitterness complain that yonder one,  
Whose life moves in a golden dream, is child  
Of love, and we, to whom he draws *so close*,  
Forsaken ones. Ah! heart, thy reasoning  
Is false, but lay aside *all reason*, and  
Then *feel* his love. Some things we know by  
thought,  
But not the deeper things that link to God.  
When souls reach out and grasp the Infinite  
There is no room for thought, but only love  
That feels, and knows because it feels.

#### Last night

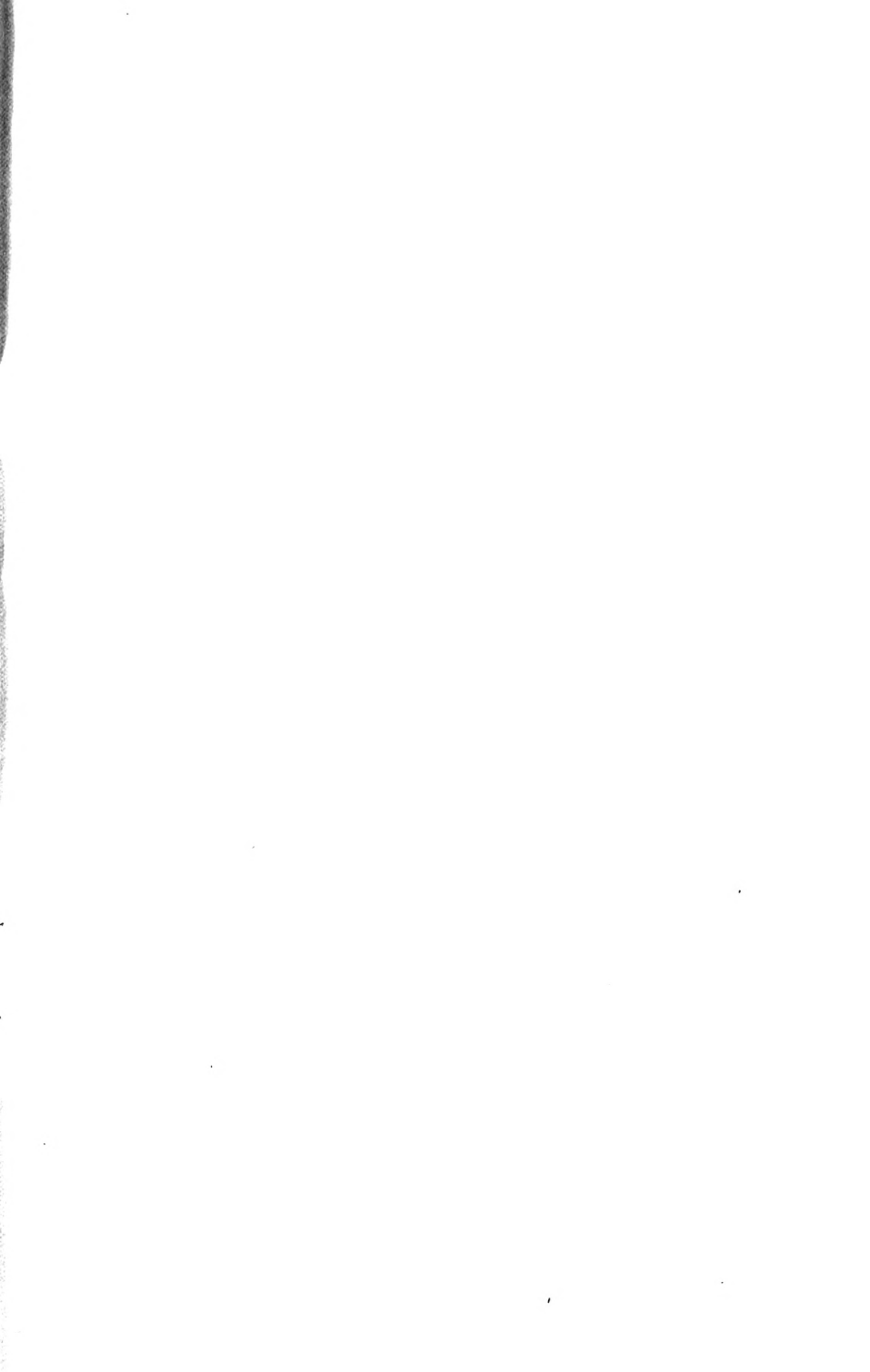
I sent my soul into the universe  
Of earth and sea and sky to find the law  
That underlies the cosmic sweep of worlds  
And all their innerness. "Oh! tell me, soul."

I said, "Why earth, this rocky mass that sprang  
From chaos into symmetry, and bound  
By the illimitable deep, sweeps on  
To cosmic harmony in circles not  
Seen but appointed, was breathed to life  
By Word Omnipotent? And why those lights  
That burn about it, but yet gravitate  
In other circles, swung to melody,  
All threading limited and certain paths  
In the illimitable, boundless heavens?"

And soon my soul returned and answered, "Love  
Is law of these." "But soul, if love is law  
Of stars and suns, find now the law that made  
And governs lesser things." And then my soul  
Replied, "No flower nor fish nor bird nor beast  
Nor man but lives by law of love, deep writ  
In Mind Omniscient." "One thing more, O soul,  
The law that governs suffering," and straight  
My soul sped to the heights of Calvary  
And sought the form of Pain Supreme, as hung  
That trembling passion of eternal Love  
In sensate shape, and felt far sharper than  
Mere mortals feel the shafts that ran through nerve  
And flesh, for here was strength of feeling keyed  
To sentient power of God. My soul looked long  
Into the yearning passion of the eyes,  
As pinioned to the cross in lines of steel  
And pillowed on the thorn-set crown, there hung

The Form Supreme, the living, dying God,  
The image of Eternal Love outlined  
In consummated, gathered force of pain  
That man could bear not in this world alone  
But rather that that in eternal woes  
Of the abyss awaited him, and now  
Expressed in concentrated agonies  
Of hell, and taken into nerve and sense  
Of God, suspended in the midday air  
Of midnight gloom, no artist's dream of woe,  
But living form of Love in sacrifice.  
Say not that sight of Love has ne'er appeared,  
But only concept in the poet's mind —  
An outline framed by the sensitive soul;  
For Love hath once appeared, yet in no lines  
Of unimpassioned beauty, but the strong,  
Impressioned, passionate outlines of life  
In suffering. No need to tell thee now  
The answer that my soul brought back to me,  
No need to whisper now of law that weaves  
Itself in fabric of thy pain, for woof  
Of Christ's fierce agony is woof of thine —  
The love that weaves to perfecting in web  
Of suffering. Then falter not, but bear,  
Beloved, bear on to the hidden end —  
The end whose unapparence gives to faith  
Its golden glow — nor pray the Father that  
He send to thy side the angel of Ease,  
But the angel of Strength.





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